

sideration of external characters and obscure points in synonymy, as Dr. Stejneger has so ably done for us, expressing himself as he does in the criticism of my memoir by saying, "A natural system cannot be based upon one single set of characters; all will have to be carefully considered, whether they are external or internal, before we can hope to understand the true relationship of the different groups" (p. 406). This is precisely, indeed the words are quite the echo of, what I have taught, and my sentiments for a number of years past, as the reader may see by referring to the leading paragraphs in my "Osteology of the Cathartidæ," published in 1883 in Hayden's Twelfth Annual, by the Department of the Interior.

Very respectfully,

Ft. Wingate, New Mexico,
4th August, 1886.

R. W. SHUFELDT.

ERRATUM.—In Dr. Shufeldt's letter in the July 'Auk,' p. 414, for "nine," in the first line of the letter, read mine.—EDD.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE NEXT meeting of the American Ornithologist's Union will be held in Washington; Tuesday, November 16, and following days. A very interesting meeting is anticipated, and a much larger attendance than usual of both Active and Associate Members is expected. The meeting will be chiefly occupied with the reading and discussion of scientific papers. There will be in addition the usual reports of committees.

DR. F. W. LANGDON, of Cincinnati, has in preparation a work on 'Ohio Valley Birds,' which he hopes to have soon ready for the press. It will be devoted to the birds of the region drained by the Ohio River and its tributaries. Besides some matter relating to ornithology in general, it will include descriptions and life histories of Ohio Valley birds.

A 'MANUAL of North American Birds,' by Mr. Robert Ridgway, is announced as in press, to be published by J. B. Lippincott and Co., of Philadelphia. The work will be abundantly illustrated and, it is needless to say, most carefully and thoroughly prepared.

DR. LEONHARD STEJNEGER announces his intention (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 1886, p. 99) "to write a comprehensive and reliable guide to Japanese ornithology, with ample descriptions of all the known forms from original Japanese specimens." Finding his material for the work still incomplete he earnestly requests assistance in gathering it, in order to enable him to satisfactorily fulfil the task he has undertaken. The work will be based primarily on the Blakiston and Jouy collections of Japanese

birds in the National Museum, which is desirous of obtaining by exchange specimens necessary for the elucidation of the Japanese Avian fauna. Specimens loaned to Dr. Stejneger in aid of his work will be returned as soon as possible without expense to the owner.

THE Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammology of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of the Division, has issued four circulars in reference to the work of the Division. No. 1 is in relation to the 'Food-Habits of Birds'; No. 2 is 'On the English Sparrow,' and is accompanied with a 'Schedule' of inquiries; No. 3 is 'On the Economic Relations of Mammals'; No. 4 is 'Instructions for the collection of Stomachs,' of both birds and Mammals. Dr. Merriam's chief scientific assistants are Dr. A. K. Fisher and Prof. Walter B. Barrows, the latter recently instructor in Natural History at the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.

THE A. O. U. Committee on the Protection of North American Birds has resumed its meetings, and proposes to issue soon a short Bulletin on the subject of its work, with special reference to legislation in behalf of the birds.

PROFESSOR Eugen von Boeck, Director of the Central School of Bolivia, member of the International Ornithological Committee, and a naturalist who for thirty years has devoted much time to the study of the natural history of South America, died on the 30th of January, 1886, in Cochabamba, after a single day's illness from a choleraic attack. His researches were mainly ornithological, and as early as 1855 he published in 'Naumannia' a paper on the birds of Bolivia. His last contributions were papers on the birds of the valley of Cochabamba, published in the 'Mittheilungen des ornithologische Vereins in Wien' in 1884. At the time of his death he was engaged upon a translation of Taczanowski's 'Ornithologie du Pérou.' He was also the author of numerous briefer ornithological communications. Notwithstanding many other pressing engagements, he devoted much time for many years to the study of South American ornithology.